



Indonesian Woman Jailed for Complaining Mosque's Loudspeakers Volume



[Antoniush Herujiyanto AH14_240818]

The General Chairman of Muhammadiyah [the second largest Islamic community organization in Indonesia], Haedar Nasir, has said that his organization would respect the verdict made by the District Court in Medan, sentencing Meiliana, 44 (a Chinese-Indonesian woman of the Buddhist faith) to 1.5 years in prison for complaining about the volume of the 'azan' [Islamic call to prayer] that was blasted from a speaker of a mosque near her house.

Meiliana is a resident of Tanjung Balai, North Sumatra. She was found guilty of blasphemy as stipulated under articles 156 and 156A of the Criminal Code on blasphemy.

Haedar Nasir said Thursday (on 23 August), however, that her case was beyond Muhammadiyah's authority, but she could, indeed, file a judicial review on the verdict, if she was not happy about it.

Mentioning that her case is a hard lesson to learn for all Indonesians, he said that it was a must for any Indonesian to respect and develop a greater tolerance and be sensitive with the feelings of other religious followers.

According to him, the calling of "azan" is important for Muslims, reminding them of the time to perform their prayers. The point is not about the volume, but being respectful to others' religious followers.

[The incidence took place in 2016. Meiliana reportedly asked for the Mosque' management that the *azan* was "too loud" and "hurt" her ears. She had asked, therefore, for lowering the speaker's volume. Her remark has, however, triggered an anti-Chinese riot, with Muslims who claimed to have been offended by her words burning several Buddhist temples in Tanjung Balai, North Sumatra.

During the riot, the angry mob destroyed Buddha statues, and the prayer equipment such as tables, chairs, lamps and several cars and motorbikes. The police, in the meantime, managed to arrest 19 people for their role in the riot. All were, approximately, given one to four month jail sentences. They were charged with looting (eight people), two with inciting violence, and nine with malicious destruction of property.]

Source: Ameera, [arrahmah/2018/08/24/muhammadiyah-hormati-putusan-pengadilan-dalam-kasus-meiliana-kalau-tak-puas-silakan-banding/](https://www.ameera.com.my/2018/08/24/muhammadiyah-hormati-putusan-pengadilan-dalam-kasus-meiliana-kalau-tak-puas-silakan-banding/), "Muhammadiyah hormati putusan pengadilan dalam kasus Meiliana, kalau tak puas silakan banding (Muhammadiyah respects Medan District Court's verdict, sentencing Meiliana to 1.5 years in prison for complaining about the volume of a mosque's speakers)", in *Indonesian*, August 18.

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